**Autism Partnership Board**

**4/04/17**

**10am-1pm, Fownhope and Mordiford rooms, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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| **Attendees** | **Role/ Organisation**  |
| Valerie Fitch (Chair) | Parent |
| Debbie Hobbs | NAS Herefordshire |
| Abi North | NAS Herefordshire |
| Alan Harrison | Person on the Autistic Spectrum |
| Aubrey Bailey  | Autism Consultant  |
| Neville Meredith  | Herefordshire Council |
| Paula Daniels Symonds | Parent  |
| Genevieve Lewis | Herefordshire Council |
| Laura Tyler | Herefordshire Council |
| Sandra Taylor | Kemble at House |
| Niki Pitt | Parent |
| Carla Preston  | Herefordshire Council |
| Adrian Symonds  | West Mercia Police  |
| John Gorman | Herefordshire Council |
| Paul Choppen | Herefordshire Council |
| Stuart Blake (from noon) | Recruit 1st  |
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| **Apologies** | **Role/ Organisation** |
| Ruth Nolan | Senad Group |
| Amanda Mellings | Winslow Court |
| Greg Atherton | West Mercia Police |
| Helen Young | Parent |
| Michelle Bailon | Parent |
| Dr Simon Lennane | GP |
| Sylvia Nicholls | Hereford Disability United |
| Sara Siloko | Hereford Disability United |
| Cllr Swinglehurst  | Herefordshire Council |
| Wendy Dyer | Home Group |
| Kay Whitefoot | Home Group |

**Introductions, Apologies Previous Minutes**

Valerie welcomed everyone and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

John recapped the previous minutes. The minutes were proposed by and seconded by Aubrey Bailey and Debbie Hobbs respectively.

**Carers Strategy – Carla Preston**

Carla explained that the Council was working on a new Carers Strategy. She split the group up into pairs and presented some of the questions she would be asking carers to look at in order to prioritise areas of need.

Carla would like a sub group to help create the Carers Strategy. If you would like to be involved please contact Carla on cpreston@herefordshire.gov.uk.

**Kemble at Home- Sandra Taylor**

Sandra introduced herself and explained that Kemble at Home helps people live independently within their own homes. They deliver a range of visiting services as well as 24 hour living services.

Kemble also run an internal training school for care homes and care home providers called Kemble Training at Holme Lacy.

Sandra said that Kemble would like to get more involved in community events. An example of this is a 24 hour walk to raise funds to help keep Leominster Meeting Centre open. The walk starts on Tuesday 23 of May and finishes the next day. A Just Giving page will be set up for the event in due course. The current route is not known. If you would like to get involved in the walk please email Sandra at Sandra.Taylor@kembleathome.co.uk

**APB Strategy. Task and Finish group report- John Gorman**

John said he is working on an updated Autism Strategy for 2017- 2020. The current Strategy ends this year.

Following the last Board meeting an Autism Strategy task and finish group was set up and it identified 5 areas that was felt to be priorities. These are:

1. **Health**
2. **Children, Young People and Transitions**
3. **Carers and Family’s**
4. **Economic Wellbeing**
5. **Justice and Safety**

In addition, the task and finish group identified four overarching themes that we need to weave into all of the work being undertaken to meet the aims of strategy. These are;

* Increasing the awareness and understanding of all people who provide services to people on the autism spectrum
* Ensure that Autism is included in all relevant planning and strategies
* Ensure compliance with relevant legislation
* High quality data and intelligence gathering

See attached draft action plan for more information.

**Action -** John will now consult over the next 6-8 weeks with the board and people on the Autistic Spectrum on whether these priority areas are correct.

**Action – everyone** – to look at the draft priorities (attached) and to let John have any comments and proposed actions

John then asked everyone to discuss and write down what they thought the Autism Partnership Board and its members had achieved over the last 3 years. Comments included:

* The Diagnostic Pathway
* GP Training and Awareness
* Better coding by GPs on the records of their patients
* Rural Media Film-Raising Awareness
* Getting Autism included within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
* Helping form the local NAS group
* LIAG Police Training

Aubrey though the board should do a quarterly update on what it had achieved.

**Recruit 1st- Stuart Blake**

Stuart is setting up employment clinic for people on the autistic spectrum or with a learning disability. The clinic will help people improve their confidence, career aspirations and CV writing skills. Training will be run on a one to one basis lasting around 45 minutes with around 6-7 people involved on one Saturday a month starting in April. More information will be circulated when we have it. You can contact Stuart on 01432 379942 or e-mail him at sb@recruit1st.com

**A.O.B.**

**Autism Seminar** - **Hereford Disability United** Valerie reported that the event was a success and that Martin Samuels had given an update on the current plans for social care in the county.

**LIAG -** Valerie reported that the next meeting will be held within the next two weeks. The Autism Awareness training with Adrian Symonds and Fortis Living is going well. Valerie is also hoping to go on the 10 week introductory training that Police Offices go on in order to have a better understand of the training involves.

**Alan Harrison –** Alan mentioned that there was a Mental Health Priorities Steering group in Ross and wondered if the police officer involved in this group would want to join the Autism Partnership .

**NAS Update -** Debbie informed the group that she had been elected onto the National Autism Forum. Debbie thanked everyone who had voted for her.

Herefordshire and Ludlow College would like to ask different people “**What is Autism**?” for next year’s Autism Awareness week. They will hold a seminar next March and they have asked Hereford NAS to find volunteers to help out and get involved. Debbie would like to set up a group to get things moving. This group is open to everyone who would like to get involved whether it be a professional or parent. Debbie has pencilled in April 26th @ 11`o clock at the NAS Office in Hereford for the first meeting.

**Action - If you would like get involved please email Debbie on**

NAS.Herefordshire@nas.org.uk

Also – please see attached for more information on the latest news from Herefordshire NAS group

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| **Stop Press** – since the meeting Debbie has informed us that the Hereford NAS Branch has been chosen as the Mayors Charity for this coming year of office. Well done to all concerned. |

**Diagnosis**

Valerie reminded the meeting that autism is a neuro-developmental condition and not a mental health condition (although people with autism can have mental health issues). This, she said, is a distinction that is sometimes muddled.

Valerie then mentioned an e-mail that Dr Simon Lennane has sent her regarding the difficulty GPs are having with the lack of funding for in-county diagnoses.  Simon has asked for feedback from the Board concerning the possibility of GPs doing the diagnoses locally rather than out-of-county specialists.

Simon has been looking at guidance from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) regarding who can diagnosis and Valerie has asked for this to be circulated (attached - the first NICE document))

**Action Everyone**; Send John and Valerie comments and views on Simon’s proposal for GPs to be trained to diagnose.

Aubrey then spoke about diagnosis. He said that GP’s have a good tool (called AQ10) which enables them to screen people and pass them on for a subsequent assessment by a professional who has the requisite skills & experience to make a formal diagnosis. This diagnosis must include a comprehensive written report that helps the person understand in detail how their specific autistic characteristics affect them. There should also be recommendations designed to help them lead a more fulfilled life.

Aubrey noted that the Bristol Autism & Asperger Service use a relatively cost-effective system for expanding the number of locally available specialists who can diagnose autism. Using their system a specialist in their service mentors a health professional to enable them to begin doing comprehensive assessments by themselves.

To help illustrate what a diagnostic pathway should look like, Aubrey has asked that a copy of some summary guidance, published in 2016 by NICE (but separate to the document that Simon Lennane has mentioned), which lays out what a diagnosis pathway, including a comprehensive assessment should consist of and the different ways of systematically carrying it out, be circulated to members – it is also attached (the second NICE document)

**Next meetings**

Tuesday the 11th of July, Plough Lane 10-1pm

Tuesday the 17th of October, Plough Lane 10-1pm

**Attachments;**

1) The draft priorities and themes from the revised autism strategy – **please take a moment to look at this and if you have any comments, suggested amendments, proposed actions etc please let me know**

2) the latest newsletter from the Hereford NAS office plus 3) an update on activities

4) First NICE document; who can diagnose

5) Second NICE document; an outline pathway